

AMHERST COUNCIL ON AGING MINUTES
Thursday, March 9, 2017
9:00 – 10:30 AM
Glass Room, Bangs Community Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Clapp (Chair), John Magarian (Vice-Chair), Tim Atteridge (Co-Secretary), Sue Dierks (Co-Secretary), Norma Hallock, Elli Hein, Mary Hough, Etta Walsh, and Jack Wollensak (Associate COA Member).

STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Pagano (Director/Program Director), Karen Erman (Administrative Assistant), Maura Plante (Assistant Director/Services), Helen MacMellon (Social Worker).

GUESTS: Tabitha Griswold (HVES Home Care Services Information & Referral Supervisor), Avery Schleeweis (HVES Home Care Services Options supervisor), Tim O'Brian (Amherst Chamber of Commerce Executive Director). Scott Merzbach (Reporter, Gazette).

ABSENT: Dick Kofler, Rosemary Kofler (Friends of ASC), Doris Holden (Treasurer of the Friends of Amherst Senior Center).

WELCOME: Dan opened the meeting at 9:05 AM with a welcome to all and a special welcome to Tabitha Griswold and Avery Schleeweis from HVES and Scott Merzbach from The Gazette. Tim O'Brian was welcomed later in the meeting. Dan thanked John for chairing the meeting of 2/9/17.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The Secretary's Report from February 9, 2017 was accepted after corrections: p. 3. "Etta spoke with Alan Tilton" and "Etta also spoke with Josh Richmond".

TREASURER'S REPORT: On behalf of Doris, Nancy presented the Friends Financial Report. The General Account has **\$12,055.84**; the Program Account has **\$4,127.81**; the Travel Account has **\$4,368.43**; and the Investment Account (Edward Jones) has **\$50,645.42** (as of Feb. 24, 2017) making the total funds on hand to be **\$71,197.50**.

FY17 donations are **\$12,978.95**. The Census donation for 2017 are **\$5, 963**. The Friends Moved **\$3,000** from the General to the Program Account, paid **\$230.70** to update the computer program, received **\$500** from Talent sponsors and moved **\$2,000** from the General Account to the Program Account. This report was accepted.

NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS

HVES Home Care Services: Nancy introduced **Tabitha Griswold**, Information and Referral supervisor, and **Avery Schleeweis**, Options Supervisor. **Tabitha** stated that HVES is a non-profit agency, one of 7 across Massachusetts. They are located in the middle of the 24 towns they service. Their State Home Care Program is one of the biggest. Consumers have to have 6 daily activities for which they need assistance and their income has to meet a certain rate. If home delivered meals are part of their program, there is no additional cost for the service. Consumers may receive 3 hours of daily home care. As consumers need more service, they can ask Mass Health for financial help at no extra co-pay. HVES does not bill insurance companies but some of their policies may allow them to reimburse them. To access the program, consumers have to have a physical impairment such as not being able to drive for grocery shopping or make meals, etc. When coming out of the hospital, consumers can access the program the very next day. For those who are federally funded, there is no income eligibility, but HVES can only authorize the program for three months.

Avery is offering a new HVES program of providing optional information for consumers in their homes. For example, when a senior stops driving, what are their transportation options? The

focus of this service is to allow people to age in place. When a consumer is looking for a facility, then Avery works with them to find the best fit. There is always follow-up in a month after she provides information. This is a way that people can find out the services available to them while they are in their homes. Avery is learning about other programs available such as MOW and Nancy suggested she meet with our social workers to learn more about what we provide. Avery added that a new program, MOMS, delivers meals via FedEx. They come frozen and this helps consumers who have dietary restrictions. They cost about \$8.00 per meal plus shipping of \$15.

Tabitha added that other programs include community home visits to help with applications. There is an overflow for these at the moment. They are free for anyone over 60. As well, they offer a SHIN E counselor on Thursdays from 1 to 5 PM.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES

Convalescent Equipment: **Jack** reviewed the plans presented at the last meeting to put into effect some procedure changes for the convalescent closet. He was pleased to report that the new form for equipment coming into the SC is being used, thus making his work easier. All incoming equipment is being labeled before being taken to the Closet. Individual instructions for different pieces of equipment are in the process of being prepared by Lisa White. The incoming equipment is not yet being sanitized, as we have no place to do that yet. When the Convalescent Closet is relocated after the arrival of the Hill Town Clinic, then we hope to have a booth for sanitizing. Jack stated that we have reached the point of overcrowding in the closet. One plan is to call Maria Elena Garcia or Fior Suarez to have some surplus removed and sent overseas. A committee meeting will be held to determine the optimum of each type of equipment that we should retain. There are still six seated walkers in his workshop waiting for repair. In view of the surplus, some of these will be used for parts, some will be given away, and the worst junked.

A suggestion was made that perhaps other nearby towns could use the surplus to help their seniors, especially Pelham.

Senior Center Van Project: **Etta, John and Jack** will be meeting with the Northampton SC Van Co-coordinator, Jennifer Carberry, after they have had a short time of experience running their new van service. The Northampton SC transport their first paying passenger on March 13 so the meeting with them will be on Wed. March 22. We don't know if we will be able to handle wheelchairs.

HVES: **Mary** reported on the HVES Nutritional Council meeting of March 1st. After the Lunch Site Menu Survey, the reports for the spinach/cheese quiche and the chipped beef were very good while there were mixed reviews about the wheat bread and the brown rice, which while healthy, was found to be too dry. Pizza made with homemade dough was back on the menu and during Lent fish or veggies will be served on Fridays rather than meat. A new concept is being offered: the two-meal choices for the congregate meals will be a hot and a cold plate as two hot plates were too difficult to transport. They must be ordered 48 hours in advance and this will be available one to two times a week. The United Way grant initiative helped an intergenerational activity: students at Bement School made valentines for Home Delivered meals as well as learning about the program. The meal recipients greatly appreciated receiving valentines from youngsters. The update on the home-delivered meals donations is not finalized as HVES is studying the cost of wages increase with the additional time needed if donations are placed by clients in the home directly into a locked box carried by the delivery person. The cost would be \$7.50 each with a

suggested \$3.00 voluntary donation and the state reimbursing the rest. When donations were sent by mail, the amount decreased.

Highland Valley Elder Services covers the biggest geographic area in the state, but has the smallest number of clients, thus the smallest budget. The home delivered meals are federally funded with guidelines to provide meals for those 60+ years old or disabled child living with person who receives meals, and also unable to prepare a nutritiously balanced meal for oneself or lack of support system and no other access to food and unable to attend the congregate dining center. There are now no financial guidelines for this program. People going home from the hospital or nursing home can have meals for the next day if referral is made 3-4 days in advance. New clients initially receive meals for three months and then need to be re-evaluated. If meals continue, they need to be assessed on a yearly basis. To receive basic State Home Care services, clients are evaluated on criteria of 6 activities of daily living and meet financial guidelines established by the State.

COA 50th Anniversary Planning: Nancy reported that the committee of Elli and Sue would be planning the special social event for the Fall of 2017. Norma volunteered to help as well.

FRIENDS UPDATE

Talent Show: John reported that the biggest fundraiser of the year, the Talent show, will be held on **Sunday, March 26th**, from **2-4 PM** at Buckley Recital Hall, Amherst College. A Banner, which will hang across Pleasant Street, will be on display for the week of March 13-20. The Friends have ordered 10 lawn signs to be made and put out around town starting March 13. The Show will have 17 contestants, each performing for 5 minutes. Acts include vocalists, guitarists, a violinist, a pianist, a magician, and dancers. The contestants will be scored by 5 judges on the basis of talent and stage presence. That will make up 70% of the score. The audience response will comprise the remaining 30% of the score. Audience response will be based on decibel level and length of applause. Prizes are \$1000, \$500, and \$250. Thus far, they have raised \$1,750 from business sponsors to cover the prize money. They have raised another \$1,100 from the 45 application fees of \$25 each. That does not quite cover their major expenses for ads in the Gazette, the banner, lawn signs, a sound engineer and piano tuners, plus incidental costs. Tickets are available at the SC Receptions desk for \$15 for adults and \$7 for children and students.

The Texas Roadhouse fundraiser on February 28th raised \$140.

STAFF REPORTS

Helen reported that the Caregivers Resources Workshop was well attended by Town employees. The packet of Resource Information is available.

Tim O'Brien, (Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce), spoke about the new site for the Amherst Visitor Information Center that is more visible on S. Pleasant St. facing the Common. They are looking for volunteers for the center for two or three hours at a time. They would like to open it on the weekends as well as during the week. Volunteers should know the area and be naturally friendly and seniors would be a great help. They must be able to provide information on attractions and events, distribute maps and related printed material, and suggest dining and lodging options. A new local map will soon be available to be added to the information. Volunteers must have a CORI check and will go through an orientation process.

Nancy spoke about the League of Women Voters upcoming CivicFest on Friday, March 24th at the Amherst Regional Middle School auditorium from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. There will be teams of people debating on questions about government and politics, this year focusing on the American Institutions of Congress, the Supreme Court and the Presidency. The SC has been asked to supply a team and Nancy is looking for three more people to join John Magarian who has already volunteered to be on the SC team.

From March 22-26th, middle and high school students from the Town's sister city, Kanegasaki, in Japan will be visiting Amherst. Nancy and the KSCC will be assisting with a welcome reception at Town Hall, various dinners and Saturday touring for the chaperones.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM. Many thanks were expressed to Etta for providing the delicious refreshments.

The Next COA Meeting will be on Thursday, April 6, 9-10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted
Sue Dierks, Co-Secretary

DOCUMENTS LIST

The following Documents were made available to all members of the COA during the meeting. They are available for review at the Amherst Senior Center, 70 Boltwood Walk, Amherst, MA.

1. COA Meeting Agenda for March 9, 2017
2. Minutes of COA Meeting for February 16, 2017
3. Friends of Amherst Senior Center Treasurer's Report
4. Friends of Amherst Senior Center Report to COA
5. Sub-Committee Report on Van Program and Convalescent Closet
6. Sub-Committee Report on HVES Nutrition Council Meeting 3/1/17
7. Poster for New Amherst Visitor Information Center
8. Letter from League of Women Voters per invitation to CivicsFest